

knees metallic green; thorax closely punctured at the sides; elytra metallic green, closely punctured, the lateral margin with a longitudinal costa.

Var. Elytra obscure cupreous.

Length 3 lines.

Head greenish black, finely and closely punctured, depressed between the eyes; antennæ extending to the base of the thorax, the four lower joints fulvous, the rest black, third joint elongate and the longest. Thorax transverse, the sides nearly straight, the anterior angles broadly produced; surface with several irregular depressions; the disk impunctate, the sides closely punctured. Scutellum black, triangular. Elytra strongly depressed along the suture, very closely and distinctly covered with larger and smaller punctures, now and then arranged in irregular lines; parallel and close to the lateral margin runs a narrow ridge or costa nearly to the apex. Underside greenish black, the sides of the breast more or less marked with fulvous; legs of the same colour, the knees and tarsi greenish or quite black.

At once distinguished from the other two known species by the unicolorous fulvous thorax, legs, and base of the antennæ.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE XI.

- Fig. 1. *Hæmonia japana*, p. 190.
 2. *Donacia constricticollis*, p. 192.
 3. *Criocoris lewisi*, p. 194.
 4. *Pedrillia unifasciata*, p. 197.
 5. *Chlamys japonica*, p. 198.
 6. *Cryptocephalus difformis*, p. 201.
 7. — *nobilis*, p. 203.
 8. — *partitus*, p. 200.
 9. *Leprotus pulverulentus*, p. 203.
 10. *Nodostoma ruficollis*, p. 205.
 11. *Chrysomela obscurolfasciata*, p. 208.
 12. *Gastrolina japana*, p. 210.

March 3, 1885.

Prof. W. H. Flower, LL.D., F.R.S., President, in the Chair.

Dr. E. Hamilton laid on the table the specimen of the supposed Wild Cat (*Felis catus*) from Donegal, Ireland, exhibited by Mr. Tegetmeier at the last meeting, and made the following observations:—

It is recorded that at the meeting of the Society on Tuesday, January 28, Mr. Tegetmeier exhibited a specimen of the Wild Cat (*Felis catus*) from County Donegal, Ireland.

As up to the present time there is no authentic instance of the

Wild Cat being indigenous to Ireland, I wrote to Mr. Tegetmeier for further information, and he has kindly allowed me to examine the skin. As far as can be judged by external marks, I have no hesitation in saying that this skin from Donegal is only another of the many specimens which from time to time have been recorded as Wild Cats, but which are only the offspring of domestic Cats that have run wild and have bred in the woods and mountains of the district. It is a well-ascertained fact that the progeny of these Cats, after two generations, always assume the grey, brindled, or tabby fur; but the difference in the tail and feet in the wild species (*Felis catus*) is very distinct.

Many of our early English naturalists who have written upon the subject have stated that the Wild Cat is to be found in Ireland. But neither Pennant nor Bewick gives Ireland as its habitat. Sir W. Jardine says:—"In Ireland it abounds in similar situations as in England and Scotland, that is in the mountainous districts," but his only authority was information derived from his brother, an officer stationed with his regiment in the west of Ireland. Bell, in the edition of 'British Quadrupeds,' 1837, says "some parts of Ireland." This remark is repeated in the edition of 1864, without further comment, although at that date it had been well ascertained that the animal did not exist in Ireland. Mr. Thompson, in his 'Natural History of Ireland,' says:—"The Wild Cat (*Felis catus*) cannot with certainty be given as a native animal." Mr. Thompson appears to have thoroughly investigated the matter; and his opinion is of great importance. He says the largest Cat he ever saw, which weighed 10 lb. 9 oz., was shot in a wild state at Shanes Castle; this specimen was *Felis catus* in everything but the form of the tail, which was not bushy at the end, and the fur, which was finer in texture. In the Larne Journal, Feb. 1839, it was reported that the Wild Cat was found in Tullamore Park, and also used to frequent the shores of Ballintrae; "but on questioning Mr. Creighton, Lord Roden's game-keeper, he informed me that he had never seen this species in Ireland." He was able to compare this Cat with two Wild Cats which had been brought to him in the flesh by his relative Mr. Langtreay, which had been killed a few days previous in Aberdeenshire; and he says it was as strong in every respect as that animal but of a lighter grey colour, and he says the animal appeared to be a genuine hybrid between *Felis catus* and the domestic Cat.

Further investigations since Thompson's time all tend to prove the non-existence of this species in the sister island. Sir Victor Brooke writes:—"A well-authenticated instance of the occurrence of the true Wild Cat in Ireland has never been recorded. Several specimens of Cats closely resembling in markings the Wild Cat have from time to time been produced as veritable examples, but upon inspection by naturalists they have invariably proved to be descendants of tame Cats run wild, perhaps for several generations. These beasts attain a great size, and very closely assimilate to the true Wild Cat in their form and coloration."

Mr. La Touche says:—"I have just received your letter. Last Sunday I met one of my Galway consins, and he told me that he remembered when he was a boy the County Grand Jury gave money for heads of Wild Cats, which were supposed to be most numerous and destructive, and that he well remembered his father's keeper (his father was Sir John Burke, of Marble Hill, county Galway) often getting this money. I asked him if he ever saw the Cats, and he says he recollects being shown one or two, and they were *Martens*, always called Cats by Irish keepers."

Mr. Kennedy writes:—

"I do not believe in the existence of the true *Felis catus* or Wild Cat as indigenous in Ireland, although Knox, Maxwell, and others state that they have seen them; all I know is that Carte, our highest authority here (curator of the Dublin Society's Museum), has been trying for years to get a specimen of it without success. The examples alluded to are, I imagine, wild tame Cats such as you and I have seen prowling after birds and small vermin in the woods, which do much mischief in this way; but they are smaller than the Wild Cat and have not the short bushy tail. Your friend will find in Thompson's 'Natural History of Ireland' all that can be said in favour of the Wild Cat existing in Ireland, but that is not conclusive."

Sir J. W. Wilde writes:—

"I have known a great number of Cats in my time—gentle, tame, spiteful, venomous, vicious, cruel, clean, dirty, honest, stealing, &c.; but I never saw a Wild Cat, certainly not in the west of Ireland; all Cats I saw there were evidently tame ones that had got into the rocks and become wild."

In another letter he says:—

"Mr. La Touche has asked me to communicate with you respecting the existence of the Wild Cat in Ireland. I never met with such an animal, although, both as a sportsman and somewhat of a naturalist, I have had ample opportunities for observation. There is no purely Irish name for Cat, for the word Catt, or, as it is pronounced, Catta, is a mere corruption of the English term. In the 'Proceedings' of the Royal Irish Academy for 1860 you will find a lengthened essay of mine upon the unmanufactured animal remains then belonging to that institution: it contains much curious information on the ancient animals of Ireland. That the Domestic Cat has occasionally strayed from home and gone wild is quite true; and instances of the kind occurred in my place in Connemara some years ago, where in a cave by the lake-side a Cat brought out her young, and, frightened by the dogs, would never come near the house again.

"The only ancient reference which I can now lay hands on is that of the ancient Irish poem treated of in the tract already referred to, where it is said two Cats were procured from the cave of Ratticrohan in county Roscommon, but I see no reason for believing that they were originally wild. The word used in the original MSS. is *Chait*, but it is evidently a corruption of the English term."



It is very evident therefore that the Wild Cat does not exist in Ireland; had it been otherwise, undoubted examples would long since have been discovered, and any doubts finally set at rest. Such not being the case, we must exclude Ireland from the list of countries inhabited by *Felis catus*.

Felis catus, so far as is known, inhabits the northern part of Great Britain, where it has become extremely rare, France, Germany, Poland, Switzerland, Hungary, the southern part of Russia, Spain, Dalmatia, Greece, and part of Turkey. It is not found in Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Italy, or North Russia.

A letter was read from Mr. J. H. Thompson, of New Bedford, Mass., U.S.A., C.M.Z.S., stating that "among some interesting land Mollusca collected by Mr. P. G. Thompson on the island of Eleuthera, or rather on a small 'key' adjacent to the north end of Eleuthera (Bahama Group, West Indies), were several specimens of *Helix (Hemitrochus) filicosta*, Pfr. (P. Z. S. 1845, p. 73; Reeve, Icon. no. 1437), the locality of which had been previously unknown.

The following papers were read:—

1. General Observations on the Fauna of Kilima-njaro.

By H. H. JOHNSTON, F.Z.S.

[Received March 3, 1885.]

I have been asked to say a few words of a general character to precede the papers which will be read before you to-night on the subject of the collections made by the Kilima-njaro Expedition. This undertaking, I need not remind you, was made at the joint expense of the British Association and the Royal Society. The Kilima-njaro Committee which was formed by these two Societies honoured me by choosing me as the leader of the Expedition, and placed £1000 at my disposal. This sum, while amply sufficient for equipping and supporting an ordinary African expedition during six months, did not allow of my taking any European collectors with me, as every individual who had any knowledge of natural-history collecting required his travelling expenses to be paid between London and Zanzibar, going and returning, and about £100 salary, with provision made for his widow and children in case of untimely demise.

I did not leave England, however, with an idea that the task of making the natural-history collections would solely devolve on myself. Collectors from India had been spoken of and their expenses were to be defrayed by the authorities of the Indian Botanical Gardens. On arriving at Zanzibar I found the disagreeable news awaiting me that none of these promised helpers could be sent owing to their great dislike to travelling in Africa. Consequently I had to depend on the chance aid of such natives of Zanzibar accompanying my caravan as might evince any taste for natural-history.